(c) Centrally Sponsored Oilseeds Production Programme (OPP) and National Pulses Development Project (NPDP) are in implementation in various States to increase the production and productivity of Oilseeds & Pulses. Under both the schemes financial assistance is provided on various critical inputs like production and distribution of seeds, distribution of seed minikits, sprinkler sets, gypsum/pyrites, improved farm inplements, micronutrients and rhyzobium culture etc. to induce the farmers to take up cultivation of these crops on large scale. In addition, frontline and general demonstrations are also organised on farmer's fields to disseminate production technology.

(d) After the implementation of O.P.P. the production of oilseeds has increased from 186.0 lakh tonnes in 1991-92 to 222.4 lakh tonnes in 1997-98. Similarly, through the implementation of N.P.D.P., the production of pulses has increased from 120.2 lakh tonnes in 1991-92 to 133.5 lakh tonnes in 1997-98. Further, the targets for the current year have been fixed at 270 lakh tonnes for oilseeds and 155 lakh tonnes for pulses.

Agricultural Production

493. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the impact of flood on agricultural production this year especially in Assam, Bihar, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh; and

(b) the steps taken to minimise the impact of anticipated shortage of foodgrains production in the country in 1998-99?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) The floods during South-West monsoon period reportedly damaged cropped area of 30.37 lakh ha. in the States of Assam, Bihar, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh.

(b) The overall decline in production of foodgrains in Kharif 1998 is marginal as compared to 1997-98. Further, as per the current trend of sowing, the prospects of Rabi crop are bright.

Prices of Cotton

DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether cotton prices are falling down;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor, and

(c) the steps taken to purchase the cotton of farmers to help them in distress?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (c) The prices of cotton which had declined recently due to peak harvest season have started increasing. The whole sale price indices for raw cotton are:—

August	377.1
September	370.4
October	361.9
November	367.3

The Prices are, however, prevailing much above the minimum support prices.

The Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) as nodal agency of the Government makes purchases for price support as and when the market prices touch the minimum support prices. The CCI also makes purchases under commercial purposes and for export purposes.

Development of Horticulture in Tribal Areas

495. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are making special budget allocation for the development of horticulture in the backward and tribal areas;

(b) if so, the details of the Central allocation made to Orissa during last three years;